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***CARDIN TOURS HARRY HUGHES CENTER FOR
AGRO-ECOLOGY IN QUEENSTOWN***

QUEENSTOWN, MD – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin** (D-MD), today joined with former Maryland Gov. Harry Hughes in a tour of the Harry Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology, a leading non-profit institution that is committed to helping Maryland farmers and foresters stay profitable while improving the health of the Chesapeake Bay.

The Center has received approximately \$5 million in federal funding for 54 research projects to improve the farming and forestry practices in the Bay's watershed. During the tour, Senator Cardin visited the University of Maryland's Wye Research and Education Center's water quality laboratory, where Dr. Ken Staver has been studying the movement of nitrogen and phosphorus through agricultural systems in Coastal Plain watersheds. Dr. Staver also is assessing the nutrient uptake and biofuel potential of native warm season grasses like switchgrass, and the Senator's tour included a visit to the switchgrass plots where this research is taking place.

Senator Cardin also toured the aquatic toxicology laboratory where researchers Dan Fisher and Lance Yonkos have been working for several years on projects to identify the effects of poultry-litter associated contaminants on Chesapeake Bay water quality.

"The sustainability of the Bay's rich ecology system is critical to the livelihood of farmers, watermen and to the enjoyment of visitors to our region," said **Senator Cardin**, a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. "I am committed to ensuring that we undertake the research that is necessary to develop policies that will help restore and protect the Bay for future generations."

"We were pleased to have the opportunity to showcase just a few of the more than 50 projects the Center has funded during the last ten years," said **Russ Brinsfield**, executive director of the Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology. "These projects would not have been possible without the strong support and leadership shown by Senator Cardin and the entire Maryland Congressional delegation."

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